

St. Marys Downtown Development Authority (DDA)
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Meeting Minutes for May 12, 2014

The meeting of the St. Marys DDA was called to order by Straight at 8:45 am.

Members Present: Charlie Smith, Jim Lomis, Gary Straight, Cheri Richter, Councilman Dave Reilly, and Terry Landreth

Members not Present: Bill Bruce

Guest in attendance:

Staff: Renée Coakley; Executive Assistant

Minutes: The April 15, 2014 meeting minutes were presented by Smith. It was noted that under the Historic Tree Trail section the matching fund amount needs to be changed to reflect \$15,000. Motion to approve the minutes with the noted change was made by Smith and seconded by Lomis. All were in favor.

Treasurers Report: Straight announced that the budget for Economic Development has been cut but was not sure by how much. Smith presented the financials for the month and motion to approve the financials was made by Lomis and seconded by Richter. All were in favor of.

Additions to the Agenda: The following were added to the agenda: Bicycle Trails by Landreth, Meeting Street Dock by Lomis, and GEM Bottling Plant by Straight. Motion to approve the agenda with the additions was made by Lomis and seconded by Richter. All were in favor.

BUSINESS DISCUSSION:

Team Camden: Straight reported on the success of the Georgia Leadership event on May 9th. Renée reported on the Coast Guard Community Picnic on May 17th. Straight asked anyone that would be available volunteer to help out on that day.

St. Marys Intracoastal Gateway (SMIG): Straight reported that the committee met on May 8th and currently has no new developments. The Forum group visited recently with two architects from New York and Miami. The visitors were given a tour of the property and Downtown St. Marys.

Maritime Heritage District (MHD): Richter reported that nothing has changed. Straight recommended that Richter set up a meeting for them both with the City Planner to discuss this item.

Historic Tree Trail: Richter reported that the group is working on the text for the signage. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, May 13th.

Guide to Camden Artwork: Richter reported that the draft will be completed this week and she will email it to the board for comments.

Economic Development Committee: Lomis reported that the committee is still in limbo.

Wayfinding: No change.

Meeting Street Dock: Lomis asked the board about a plan for funding that was mentioned some time ago that could be used for expanding the dock (adding slips) and adding restrooms, etc. The board did not recall this discussion and will review to determine if this is something that has been overlooked in the absence of an Economic Development Director.

Bicycle Trails: Landreth reported on a meeting he attended in April regarding a Georgia Trails Summit. Landreth presented a study that was created in regards to trails across Northwest Georgia. He will facilitate getting this information to the Coastal Regional Commission. Landreth will put a proposal together for the DDA Board for endorsement to present to the naval base and public officials.

GEM Bottling Plant: Straight reported on a recent tour he attended at the plant with other board members and the Mayor. The plant is currently vacant, and is complete with state of the art equipment. The building is for sale and will include a 10,000 square foot warehouse in the purchase. Straight has contacted Gateway Behavioral Health System in regards to his currently overseeing the building. Those contacts have been obtained and he also learned that the property is listed with a firm in Atlanta for \$500-750,000. Straight noted that he felt this is a project that the DDA should take lead on to get increased exposure for the building. The board agreed that a lot of questions in regards to the closure of the property need to be addressed/answered. Research into the viability of this project also needs to be completed. Lomis agreed to accompany Straight on a trip to Brunswick to speak with the Chief Financial Officer in regards to the community's interest. Motion to explore the economic viability opportunities and meet with appropriate contacts for the former business and its available options was made by Lomis. The motion was seconded by Reilly. All were in favor.

DIRECTORS REPORT

Businesses and Updates: The Interim City Manager was not available so nothing was reported.

Adjourn – Meeting adjourned at 9:45 am with motion by Landreth and second by Richter. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 9th at 8:30 am.

Charlie Smith, Secretary

Prepared by Renée Coakley, Executive Assistant